

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HEATHCOTE SECONDARY SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON MONDAY 24TH September 2025
AT 6:30PM
AT THE SCHOOL**

Present:	Lauren Marchant, Chair	Co-opted Governor
	Sonia Close, HT	Headteacher
	Sharon Morgan	Local Authority Governor
	Leonie Alderman	Parent Governors
	Claire Feiner	
	Maria Slavovski	
	Andre Henry	Staff Governor

Clerk to the Governors: Angela Lenton

Summary of agreements and actions:

Minute reference	Formal agreements and/or actions identified	Named person(s) for action(s) identified	Completion date
5.	<p>Action: Clerk to request clarity on whether a pay committee is needed with Donna at Governors' Services</p> <p><i>Response: as the new Pay and Conditions set out in the Council's model policy, there is still the need for governors to consider threshold applications – so, those have to go somewhere, this 'could' be combined with Resources, so that one meeting per year is Resources and Pay.</i></p>	Clerk/ Governor Services	25.9.2025
6.3	Action: Lauren to contact James to seek clarity regarding his ongoing term of office	Lauren	-
9.	<p>Agreed: to keep school Governing Board/Body Code of Conduct with actions below added.</p> <p>Action: add expectation that all FGB meetings are to be held face to face</p>	Lauren	Immediate

Chair's Initials:

	<p>Action: Lauren to add FGB have to be attended in person, only under exceptional circumstances will the Chair consider and agree with individual’s need to join meetings online (requests to be made 48 hours in advance). Cameras are to be turned on if joining online.</p> <p>Action: Lauren to add a sentence to the Induction Policy regarding the expected code of conduct with regards to Governor’s communication through the systems used, including the agreed use of the WhatsApp Group.</p>		
10.	Action: All governors need to complete the questionnaire on GovernorHub	All	
11.	Agreed: The resources meeting agreed for 4 th February 2026 will now be a FGB, held in the school at 6.30pm.	-	-
12.	Action: Sharon to complete Governors Induction Training	Sharon	Next FGB
15.18/15.19	Action: SEND Policy 2025-26 to be ratified at the next meeting SEND Information Report 2025-26 to be ratified at the next meeting		
	Date of next meeting: 4th February 2026 6.30pm FGB 4 th February 2026, time 6.30pm, FGB held at the school	All /GS	Immediate
	Agenda item: SEND Policy and SEND Information Report 2025-26		

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Laura Alexander.
- 1.2 No apologies for absence were received from James Bore and therefore these were not accepted. This is now the 3rd meeting missed with no apologies.
- 1.3 The meeting was quorate with seven members present.

2. NOTICE OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS/ CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Nothing to discuss.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 3.1 Register of Business Interests – Governors were reminded to confirm their Pecuniary Interests on GovernorHub.
- 3.2 There were no declarations made pertaining to any of the agenda items for this meeting.

Chair’s Initials:

4. APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS

- 4.1 Election of chair for the academic year 2025/26; Lauren Marchant was voted in.
- 4.2 Election of Vice-Chair for the academic year 2025/26; Claire Feiner was voted in.

5. GOVERNING BOARD/BODY COMMITTEES

- Governors discussed merging Quality of Education / Behaviour and Personal development into one committee. This was **agreed**. Committee will consist of Laura, Maria, Claire and Sonia.
- It was agreed remaining governing body members would become the resources committee; Sharon, Helen, Leonie and James (if remaining on the governing body). Sonia and Andre are not able to be a part of the resources committee.
- Pay
Q: Sonia asked if a Pay committee is still required given performance related pay is no-longer in place, unless a member of staff is on capability.
Action: Clerk to request clarity on whether a pay committee is needed with Donna at Governors' Services

*Response: as the new Pay and Conditions set out in the Council's model policy, there is still the need for governors to consider threshold applications – so, those have to go somewhere, this 'could' be combined with Resources, so that one meeting per year is Resources **and Pay**.*

- Headteacher's Performance Management – review to be completed by 31/12/2025 – it was agreed Lauren, Sharon and Helen will complete this by the required date.

6. GOVERNING BODY

- 6.1 There are currently 3 Co-Opted Governor vacancies, if James resigns this will increase to 4. 9 people have expressed an interest in becoming potential Governors and are coming to meet with Sonia to discuss this further. There is a potential that 3 of these could become Co-Opted Governors and any suitable remaining people could become parent governors.
- 6.2 Maria's term of office ends 31/10/2025 – discussion was had regarding making her a Co-Opted Governor. Difference between a Co-Opted Governor and Parent Governor was explained. Decision made to make Maria a Co-Opted Governor
- 6.3 Discussion had regarding James' non-attendance or responses to emails or messages.
Action: Lauren to contact James to seek clarity regarding his ongoing term of office
- 6.4 All DBS checks have been completed by all governors and details are held on file by Governors Services.
- 6.5 Details held about governors are provided to the Secretary of State via GIAS – information is up to date and accurate.
- 6.6 Discussion was had regarding the governing board and diversity. This information was queried with regard to its accuracy. All agreed to take this into account and to be mindful of this going forward with new co-opted governors etc.

Commented [AL1]: Check this with Chair

7. MINUTES

Chair's Initials:

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7.1 Governors received the minutes of the governing body meeting held on 14th July 2025 and agreed these to be an accurate record of the meeting.

7.2 Matters arising

Minute reference	Formal agreements and/or actions identified	Status Update
4.1	Agreed: Minutes 24 th July 2025, Chair to sign	Completed
4.2.13.2	Agreed: Recommended Terms of Reference for BAPD and QoE committees	Completed
4.2.7.1	Action: To send the Risk Register to the Chair (LM) for signing	- Update: Chair has now received this and will be finalising and signing off.
6.2	Action: To include the following post-meeting note at item 6.2 in the minutes of the meeting of the BAPD committee held on 16 th June 2025: The data reported in bullet points 1,2,3 and 7 has since been reviewed and corrected. Please refer to the Headteacher's report attached to the minutes of the FGB held on 14 th July 2025 for full attendance reporting and analysis.	Completed
11.4	Action: Clerk to ask Governor Services for a model induction policy and email the NGA induction document to the Chair.	Completed
13	Agreed: To set-up a broadcast only governor WhatsApp group.	Completed
14.3	Agreed: Governors unanimously voted Sharon Morgan as the LA governor for Heathcote school, subject to completion of the referencing process.	Completed
14.4	Agreed: FGB meetings to be in-person only. A request for hybrid attendance, due to exceptional circumstances, may be sent to the Chair up to 48hours in advance of a meeting for the Chair's consideration.	Completed
	Agenda item: School trips: Tour company updates	Completed Agenda Item 16

Chair's Initials:

8. CHAIR'S ACTION

No actions to report

9. GOVERNING BODY CODE OF CONDUCT

• **Agreed to keep school Governing Board/Body Code of Conduct**

Parent Governor asked if a list of acronyms could be added to the induction policy for ease of reference.

Agreed: acronyms to be written in full alongside acronym for ease of reference

Action: add expectation that all FGB meetings are to be held face to face

Discussion was had regarding the commitment section of the policy:

Action: Lauren to add FGB have to be attended in person, only under exceptional circumstances will the Chair consider and agree with individual's need to join meetings online (requests to be made 48 hours in advance). Cameras are to be turned on if joining online.

• Discussion was had regarding the WhatsApp Group.

Agreed: This group is to be used for quick updates. Only governors who gave permission to be added have been. Any questions / discussions to be added to the GovernorsHub. All Governors to follow code of conduct with regards to all communication methods, including WhatsApp.

Action: Lauren to add a sentence to the Induction Policy regarding the expected code of conduct with regards to Governor's communication through the systems used, including the agreed use of the WhatsApp Group.

10. GOVERNING BODY EFFECTIVENESS ANALYSIS

Action: All governors need to complete the questionnaire on GovernorHub

11. GOVERNING BODY ANNUAL CYCLE

Full GBM needs to be added to the annual cycle.

Agreed: The resources meeting agreed for 4th February 2026 will now be a FGB, held in the school at 6.30pm.

12. GOVERNOR'S TRAINING

Sharon has completed Safeguarding Training

Action: Sharon to complete Governors Induction Training

13. RATIFIED BUDGET 2025-26

Deficit budget has been submitted and approved by the Local Authority, LA were complimentary of the deficit recovery plan to bring the school out of deficit.

Discussion was had regarding the deficit budget and student numbers – Sonia explained a high number of Ukrainian students had left the school and had not been replaced. Years 7 to 9 are currently full. Year 10 has 1 space and Year 11 15 spaces. The number of disadvantaged students has decreased from 33% to 28%. The Chair and governing body members thanked Sonia for the hard work she has done with the budget work and deficit recovery plan.

14. Year 11 and 13 DATA

Sonia gave a detailed presentation of the data included in the pack.

SWOT analysis was shared with regards to the data; persistence absence will be a focus.

Q: Do we have a teacher of the deaf yet?

A: Primary teacher has been moved over, who is SENCO trained, and will undertake interventions with deaf students.

Q: How does the positive attainment data for 24/25 impact 25/26 attainment data?

A: Very different cohort for year 11 this year, very able but different learning behaviours which the team are focusing on

Q: Has the 24/25 attainment data been shared with the current Year 11s?

A: Yes, this was shared during an assembly, 6th Form requirements and expectations were also shared with the cohort.

Q: With EBACC not being pushed on children, does this effect anything?

A: No, this used to be a measure but no-longer is. The school still encourage top achievers to do a language.

Current Year 11 targets are based on CATs as no SATs due to Covid.

Governors and Chair thanked the entire staff team for their great work with the attainment data.

15. SCHOOL POLICIES

All updates to the policies were shared with the governing body

15.1 Accessibility Policy: **Ratified**

Q: Policy states SENDCo/ SENDCo Assistant ensure pupils' equipment is maintained – who is doing this and how can we ensure equipment is charged etc?

A: This is the responsibility of all teachers and will continue to be monitored.

15.2 Admissions Policy: **Ratified**

15.3 Admissions Policy for Sixth Form: **Ratified**

15.4 Behaviour for Learning Policy: **Ratified**

Changes to warning systems discussed.

Q: the policy refers to Praise Points, these are called 'Positive Points' on Arbor, can they be called the same thing?

A: Arbor can't be changed to 'Praise Points.' Sonia will look into using the term 'Positive Points' across policies and procedures to bring the term in line with Arbor.

Q: Does the target table need increasing for children to achieve 'Gold?'

A: This is flexible and the information stated is a minimum

15.5 Exams Policy 2025-26: **Ratified**

Q: Why are children using Laptops in Exams?

A: The laptops are completely disabled, laptops are only used if it is a student's normal way of working in school. All guidance and procedures are followed if laptops are used.

15.6 Exams - Contingency Plan 2025-26: **Ratified**

15.7 Exams - Malpractice Policy 2025-26: **Ratified**

Use of AI has been added

Q: Is there a policy regarding staffs' use of AI?

A: Not at present but this will need to be reviewed in the future.

15.8 Exams – Internal Appeals 2025-26: **Ratified**

15.9 Exams - Conflicts of Interest Policy 2025-26: **Ratified**

15.10 Exams - Non-Examination Assessment Policy 2025-26: **Ratified**

15.11 Fire, Action and Emergency Policy: **Ratified**

15.12 HRSE Policy: **Ratified**

15.13 Paternity Procedure: **Ratified**

15.14 Provider Access Policy: **Ratified**

15.15 Reflection and Assembly Policy: **Ratified**

15.16 Remote Learning Policy 2025-26: **Ratified**

15.17 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2025-26: **Ratified**

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Discussion was had regarding removing staff photos from the school's website. School may have to consider doing this. Any use of staff photos on social media etc are reported to the provider. TikTok always remove reported content.

15.18 SEND Policy 2025-26: **Deferred to next meeting**

15.19 SEND Information Report 2025-26: **Deferred to next meeting**

15.20 Shared Parental Leave Procedure: **Ratified**

Check spacing on the document

15.21 Support Staff Appraisal Policy

Check spacing on the document

15.22 Governor Induction Policy: **Ratified**

15.23 School Food Policy: **Ratified**

A new section on nutrition under pupil mental health and wellbeing to cover the board's role in school food. In line with the DfE's school food guidance for governors, schools are expected to have a policy on school food. It is the statutory responsibility of the governing body and trustees to ensure the School Food Standards are being met and Ofsted are putting a much greater focus on how schools are creating a culture and ethos of healthy eating.

School will be tendering a new catering contract, this will initially be 5, then down to 3 with a final presentation. Any governors can be a part of this and need to be aware of the new DfE guidance stated above.

15.24 Support Staff Probation Policy: **Ratified**

DfE guidance regarding Mobile Phones in Schools has been included in the governors' pack – this will need to be considered in the future.

Action: SEND Policy and SEND Information Report 2025-26 to be discussed at next meeting

16. SCHOOL TRIPS: TOUR COMPANY UPDATES

All insurance policies have been checked and received, alongside testimonies and the Quality Assurance Badges.

2 trips have been quoted: New York October 2026, Skiing 2027. Awaiting a quote for the France trip.

Q: Does the tour operator manage the entire process?

A: Yes, including setting payment schedules, which the school will facilitate with families.

Q: Have the school explored the issue with social media accounts and people being refused entry to the United States?

A: All students will be required to have an ETSA (Visa), where social media tags must be added. If ESTA is not approved, students will not be allowed to attend the trip.

Q: Are there any passports not allowed to enter the country?

A: This will be checked with the tour operating company

17. DATE AND AGENDA FOR THE ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

- FGB – 4th February 2026 held at the school 6.30pm

17.1 Agenda Items

Governors' Briefings will be held on:

- Wednesday 1st October 2025
- Wednesday 11th February 2026
- Wednesday 20th May 2026

At 6.00pm via MS TEAMS

Governing Bodies are asked to avoid setting meetings on these dates to enable a representative from the body to attend

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18. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
No

The meeting closed at 8.55pm

Chair's Initials: